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This demand, rather impalpable as yet, seems to be for "a federation of college groups" to co-ordinate the activities of local societies; to establish a speaker's bureau on current problems of democracy; to distribute material for group discussion; to arrange stimulating annual conferences. The emergence of such is the hope of The Young Democracy.

The persons responsible for this movement among the young people of America are not only actuated by worthy motives, they seem to be getting results. In Philadelphia there is a group with a half-time secretary at work with a membership of some three hundred. This group has organized Sunday forums, study groups, and published literature. There is a forum in the Bronx, New York. There is a Union Theological Seminary Unit. Definite steps have been taken toward a permanent federation, a temporary organization having been formed under the name "The Intercollegiate Conference for Democracy."

It is announced today, April 4, that there was organized at Harvard University yesterday "The Intercollegiate Liberal League," an organization of liberal groups in colleges and universities. The purpose of this "League" is "To create among college men and women an intelligent interest in the problems of the day." We are told that there were 250 students present, representing twenty-seven educational institutions. They announced that they proposed "to bring about a fair and open-minded consideration of social, industrial, political, and international questions by groups of college students. . . . The organization will espouse no creed or principle other than that of a complete freedom of assembly and discussion in the group." On the same day "The National Workers' Educational Bureau," having for its object the co-ordination of the existing liberal educational agencies and the creation of additional facilities of this character, was formed at a conference of liberal educational workers representing twenty cities, at the New School for Social Research, in New York City.

This all seems to be a part of a general movement more or less palpable among the young men of many countries. There is a young Japanese movement, launched in Tokyo, which is designed to enlist not only university students and young Japanese studying abroad, but also the younger elements in the old parties, with the hope that the new organization will show the way for escape from the domination of the politicians. There is a students' union in Copenhagen; indeed, there is a Scandinavian movement thought to be "of great importance." There is a similar movement in India, known as the League of Youth in India, a league which seems

to have been strengthened by opposition to alleged British attempts to control discussions among the youth of that land. There is a World's Student Christian Federation, which held a conference at St. Beatenburg, Switzerland, last August. There is a *Weltjugendliga*, with groups in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. The Cosmopolitan Clubs, familiar to us before the war, have been reorganized in this country; indeed, they held a convention during the Christmas holidays at the University of Michigan.

A magazine given to the support of such a movement among the youth of the world should be supported. It is no criticism that their views are often more emotional than rational. Such criticism lies against groups other than those of youth.

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## FRANCE

THE PEOPLE of the United States are always glad to welcome representatives of France, for Americans are lovers of France. At the outbreak of the war, in 1914, American millionaires, writers, lawyers, engineers, shop-keepers, and university students offered at once their services to France. When M. Viviani, former Premier and Minister of Justice of France, left again for our shores he knew the welcome that would be his, for he had been here before. Americans know the brightness and gaiety peculiar to French bonhomie. We admire the graciousness and vivacity of Frenchmen. We are inspired by their artistic good taste, outgrowth of many centuries of a homogeneous civilization. If there be in them a certain absence of individual spirit and responsibility, their objective worship of intelligence, freed of our hyper-introspection, explains to us their firm grasp of social questions. The French spirit of exaltation, their worship of honor, of *la gloire*, their achievements in science and industry, their freedom from fanaticism, their hatred for cant and sentimentality, appeal to the best that is in us. They may not be famous as dancers; they may not possess the best of table manners; they may not be wholly free of avarice; but we like them for the fine things in them, and because they are not "cranks," because there are no Pickwicks among them. Our best American observers find the French to be free of that sharp, thin, stridulous, eager, nervous, clever thing peculiar to many Americans. Their sense of order and proportion, their clarity of thinking, commend them to us. The French *milieu* leads us of America to wish that we might imitate it; but so far we have not been able to subordinate sufficiently our individualism. That *milieu* is the product of an infinite civilization, which can come to us only with years. The French power for organization, indeed

the French spirit, stand forth in their letters, extracts from some of which we take the liberty of printing here.

One letter complains: "Beginning with January 3, we have two new taxes to pay; one upon servants, forty francs for the first and eighty francs for the second; another upon pianos, sixty francs for the first. We spend our money in taxes. We are not able to eat a morsel of bread without saying that we have paid a tax upon the purchase of it, upon the salt, the sugar, the vegetables, etc. The land taxes have tripled, and in spite of that our national finances are in a frightful state."

Another letter says: "Our governments seem to try to complicate the international situation. It has been over two years since the armistice, and instead of advancing we seem in certain respects to have gone backward. In my opinion, we French are in an extremely difficult situation. For our faithfulness and immense sacrifices we behold nothing but selfishness among other nations, ill will and bad faith from our debtors, clumsiness and ultra-governmentalism for ourselves; furthermore, we have not been able to touch one sou of our credit. In the meantime our troops occupy Germany at great expense; the Commission of Reparations discusses without appreciable results, also at great expense, while our treasury, far from receiving our dues from the Germans, empties itself day by day in advances to the Germans. This situation is intolerable and cannot endure. . . . You will see that I am very pessimistic; but when, in the course of this war, so bloody, we treasured the hope (and the illusion) that this would be the last, and that our victory would lead to a new and better future, we are cruelly deceived, and we behold that man remains the same—that is to say, a self-seeker full of ambitions and greed. The reign of generosity and of good will among men has not yet arrived. I fear that you and I will not see it."

We are in receipt of another letter, portions of which we also take the liberty of printing. Our readers may think of the writer as the wife of one of the leading manufacturers in the devastated areas of France. Because of the personal nature of the letter, we omit names which may identify the writer. Prior to the war this lady's family had established through the years one of the leading industries of France. Their factories, however, were all despoiled and ruined by the departing Germans. Immediately following the armistice they began with characteristic French bravery the reconstruction of the mills, and that, as the pictures to which she refers show, with remarkable success. This letter, intended only as a personal communication, will even in these abbreviated extracts arouse in us the things we would express, yet cannot, as we attempt to describe the spirit, the matchless *politesse* that is France:

Perhaps you are wondering if we are all dead! No! But two of us have seemed to be dying. M—— first, with a bad attack of grippe, which touched the heart and has left her very fragile. The doctor, who at first gave me practically no hope, has been less discouraging for a while and we expect to pull her through once more. But what a time!

Then, as I was very tired, I caught diphtheria, and got it so bad that they do not know how I managed to survive it. It was most funny. The doctors and nurses lost their heads, and I had all the trouble in the world to escape having my throat cut open. I got all the complications that exist, including paralysis of the arm and throat; but when they decided that I was dying I just recovered. Only I am still rather a wreck, and so much precious time has been lost! This will, I hope, etc. . . .

We are still in very sad circumstances; in fact, it gets worse and worse; we are reaching the end of our tether and have learnt to fear the morrow. If things do not get better soon we are going to be wiped out, and all our struggles will have been struggled in vain. The disaster seems imminent now; I do not think we can fight more than a few weeks. My husband is broken-hearted, and though I try to encourage him I do not feel much better. Ruin, complete ruin, is staring us in the face, and every day the question is, "How shall we give to our workmen their daily bread?" Up to now we have managed it, but there is no money left and none to be found. France has for the first time in her history reached the end of her resources.

I have felt the disaster coming for months, but couldn't prevent it. We have done all that was possible to do, bar sending away our men and closing the works. That would have saved us, but killed them; so no hesitation was possible. They pass before everything. We are having a last trial; if we fail, we will try to prevent starvation and rebellion. I have been working toward this aim for the last six months, and I hope to be able to keep order for a while. If we succeed in our attempt to get some more money we will manage till June and then the suffering would be far less.

I don't know if I can explain what it is like to live thus with such responsibility and be able to do so little. My husband is looking dreadful, so sad and discouraged; my father-in-law has been ill about it and is in the south recuperating. I bear it better, for I am stronger; and, being more in contact with the people, I have to keep my head up and smile, only, do you know, my hair is turning white.

The injustice of it all would make us bitter. Why is it that we should suffer thus, we who haven't sinned? One thing only helps us: our undying faith in the destiny of France! If we seem to go under, some later generation will rise again; our agony will simply make the race stronger and better.

The great danger at present may be riots; specially young men's riots, because they lack the steadiness and the fortitude of older people. So I have taken the best of them and drilled them into a kind of police force. I call them either "gymnasts," or "clarions," or "singers," or "boy scouts," or several other things, according to their possibilities, and try to form them into compact bodies with uniforms and military discipline. They will be powerful agents for the good if they are strong enough at the time. I trained some of them personally. My mother-in-law says I have been extremely hard with them, and I own it is true; but you can't be overindulgent with a family of 95 big sons between seven-

teen and thirty-three. In all I have got about four hundred in working order. Girls are more difficult to train, and I could only reach about two hundred of them.

With the help of these I think we may escape riots here; already twice I got through the famous "C-G-T nets," but one must keep one's wits about; and while I was ill I went through anxious days. My husband is away now a fortnight every month, so that I am quite alone half the time. The government has elected me to the board of school controllers, and maybe I shall be sent to the national board of war orphans and several other things. I am still hoping to escape this fate; you see I have practically the power, and I am much freer without the titles; and it would mean a heavy loss of time, sitting round green baize. Talking does no good; it is far better to work and keep dumb.

We can't accuse the present government of being incapable. It does its best; but the situation is so very grave that it can't do much. We were too easy-going and have been strangled. That is the whole story. It is a sad one, but at all events an honorable one. After all, luck may turn; let us hope; it helps one to work. If only I was sure of our people's bread! You are going to think it is an obsession! Well, it is one.

The sanitary situation has not improved much, especially for women and small children; but of course it is always slow work at first. [X] has not yet one single house rebuilt; it is still just a heap of stones. I am sending you a little book in which you will find photos, photos taken in November, 1918, a little before your visit here. The other set dates from May, 1920, when the future was not yet a blank. You will be able to see the tremendous amount of work done; we were very proud of it.

Do you remember [X]? Well, it is practically alive again; I went there the other day and found the land tilled lovingly.

I am finishing this letter interrupted by an illness of L—— (false diphtheria) and by a relapse on my part, owing to overtaxed strength. It's stupid; but the truth is, work must be done, and I am no longer equal to it. Working with high fever is a slow job; but it has to be managed somehow. I am getting very anxious about my husband; these last days have left a mark on him, and there is no help for it. Good-bye, then, and good luck to you all.

Yours very sincerely,

P. S.—Yes! I am, etc. . . . Success does not mean much; what counts is the will to try, and often the help we get through a friendly word does more for us than would a fortune; it has sometimes the wonderful result of enabling us to fight our own battles till the end. I have seen the greatest successes grow out of apparent failures. The most precious gift is a part of our inner self, when it helps our neighbor to have a little more trust in humanity.

Thus we see something of that fine thing in French character which has always been attractive to Americans. More recent news leads us to believe that the situation has slightly improved for the suffering people in that devastated area. Premier Briand has just called attention to the fact that whereas the population of the devastated regions was 4,700,000 in 1914 and 1,900,000 at the time of the armistice, it is at present 4,100,000. Only poetry or music can express the depth of emotion

one feels as one thinks upon these heroic millions returning to their native soil with the will to work and to reinstate their lives and loves on a land practically a wilderness. These returning refugees have leveled 95 per cent of the area and have broken up the ground and reclaimed 80 per cent of it for agriculture; 50 per cent of the industries and mills are already in operation; 99½ per cent of the destroyed railways have been repaired, and, as we might expect from these French, 80 per cent of the art works have been restored.

While the war destroyed 1,036 kilometers of French canals, 1,017 kilometers have been wholly reconstructed; and of the 1,120 locks, culverts, etc., destroyed, 890 have been rebuilt. The French are planning to electrify all French canals carrying over 2,000,000 tons of traffic yearly, a program which will mean a saving of about 1,500,000 tons of coal each year. The total production of coal in France in 1920 was 25,276,304 tons, as against 22,478,766 tons in 1919; the production of the mines of the north and of the Pas-de-Calais destroyed during the war totaled 1,029,308 tons in December, 1920, as compared with 796,914 tons in December, 1919. The coal production of the Saar Basin in 1920 totaled 9,410,433 tons. The development of the Rhone water-power, begun in 1918, with the aid of the government, has proceeded to a joint agreement with Switzerland for the use of Lake Geneva as a regulator for the Rhone. With the completion of the projects begun or contemplated, it is estimated that France will be able to save from four to five million tons of coal annually.

The insinuation that France is making capital of her distresses in order to perpetuate hatred in the world can harm only the purveyors of such a canard.

## RUSSIA ON PROBATION

GREAT BRITAIN, the United States, and the Soviet Administration at Moscow, with Lenin as spokesman, during the past month have contributed three distinct acts of importance to be chronicled and appraised.

The Anglo-Russian trade agreement, signed in mid-March, has nominally only to do with resumption of trade; but its political repercussions will be noted in Asia as well as in Europe, and were intended to be so registered. Indeed, it is likely that protection of her imperial interests in Asia had more to do with the British Ministry's final decision than did her desire to obtain and regain markets, powerful as the latter motive undoubtedly was.

The reiteration by the United States of its refusal to resume formal trade or political relations with Russia until guarantees on fundamental issues of all forms of stable society are given has met with the criticism of only a small minority of the people, and that mainly of